without reference to assessed requirements.

(v) Rehabilitation of sick Shipping Companies, which includes a number of reliefs;

(vi) Providing cargo support to Indian shipping.

(vii) Modification of pari passu obligations.

Government also provided in the Direct Tax Laws (Second Amendment) Act, 1989 certain fiscal reliefs to the Shipping Companies so as to strengthen their capital base.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The details of the proposals pending as on 15-3-90 are :—

Name of the Shipping Company	Acquisition Proposal
1. M/s. Great Eastern Shipping Company	2 Off shore supply vessels (Specific). 10 Off shore supply vessels (for in principle approval).
2. M/s. Van Raj Marine	2 No. RO-RO Vessels
3. M/s. Ellon Hinengo	1 Cargo Ship
4. M/s. Sirius Shipping Company Ltd.	2 Bulk Carriers
5. M/s. Jaisu Shipping Company Ltd.	1 Crew-cum-cargo boat

Harassment of Indian students in Nepal

1021. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Indian students studying in Kathmandu, Nepal have been arrested and tortured by the Nepal Government; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) On February 19, 1990, some Indian students studying in Kathmandu, were arrested along with a large number of Nepali teachers and students. They were released after a varying period of confinement from three to five days. There is no evidence of their having been tortured.

(b) Immediately on learning about the arrest of these Indian students, the Embassy of India in Kathmandu took up the matter with the Nepalese Foreign Office which was asked to investigate the incident and have action taken against the erring Nepalese officials. A Consular Official from the Embassy also visited the University campus.

Detaining of Indian Journalists during pro-democracy demonstration in Nepal

1022. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Indian journalists were detained by the Police in Nepal when they went to cover the demonstrations by the pro-democracy agitators; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

कश्मीर के लोगों को निर्णय का अधिकार

1023. **श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय:** क्या वस्त्र मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार को इस तथ्य की जानकारी है कि फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति ने हाल

ही में यह मत व्यक्त किया है कि कश्मीर समस्या के समाधान के लिए कश्मीर के लोगों को आत्म-निर्णय का अधिकार दिया जाया जाना चाहिए; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो सरकार की इस पर क्या प्रतिक्रिया है ?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल): (क) फ्रांस की सरकार ने शिमला समझौते के प्रति अपना समर्थन व्यक्त किया है। बताया जाता है कि इस्लामाबाद के एक संवाददाता सम्मेलन में फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति ने आत्म-निर्णय का भी समर्थन किया था बशर्ते कि यह कश्मीर के लोगों के दावे से जुड़ा हो। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि इस मामले में फ्रांस किसी की तरफदारी नहीं करना चाहेगा।

(ख) हमने फ्रांस की सरकार को यह भी स्पष्ट किया है कि जम्मू और कश्मीर भारत का एक अभिन्न अंग है और कश्मीर के लोगों की मांगों और उनके दावों को भारत के अन्य भागों के लोगों की तरह ही देश के लोकतांत्रिक ढांचे के अन्तर्गत स्थान दिया जाता है और दिया जाता रहेगा। हमने फ्रांस की सरकार को यह भी बताया है कि कश्मीर के लोग भारत में कश्मीर के विलय को स्वीकार कर चुके हैं तथा उन्होंने बार-बार अपने लोकतांत्रिक मताधिकार का इस्तेमाल किया है।

Pak Prime Minister's help in release of Dr. Rubaiya Sayeed

1024. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had sought for personal help of the Prime Minister of Pakistan in obtaining the release of Dr. Rubaiya Sayeed from her kidnappers;

(b) if so, what are the details of Government's request and reaction of the Pakistan Prime Minister thereto; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the kidnappers of Dr. Rubaiya had communicated that their hostage would be released in Pakistan ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): (a) and (b) The Government of India had informally approached the Government of Pakistan and some Pakistani political leaders as a part of the effort to obtain the release of Dr. Rubaiya Sayeed from her kidnappers.

In response, the Government of Pakistan, through a press release released on 10th December, 1989, appealed to the kidnappers of Dr. Rubaiya Sayeed not to carry out the threats made against her, as such acts were contrary to Islamic precepts. Some Pakistani leaders also issued similar appeals.

(c) No, Sir.

Telephone facility to villages in the country

1025. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of villages in the country which have been provided with telephone facility so far; and

(b) what is the number of villages proposed to be provided with this facility during the current year ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) The number of villages which have been provided with telephone facility as on 31-3-1989 are 39,543.

(b) 3000 villages are proposed to be provided with telephone facility during the current financial year.